

**TEEN PARENTS**

**Purpose:** This section provides information that is specific to teen parent eligibility for TANF, SFA and GA-S cash assistance. These policies do not apply to medical assistance programs or food stamps.

**WAC 388-486-0005 Unmarried pregnant or parenting minors--Required living arrangement.**

- (1) This rule affects only the minor's eligibility for cash assistance. It does not affect the eligibility of the minor parent's child for a cash grant.
- (2) The following definitions apply to terms used in this section:
  - (a) "Unmarried" means a person who have never been married or whose marriage has been annulled. It does not include a person who has been divorced or widowed.
  - (b) "Minor" means a person younger than eighteen years of age.
  - (c) "Legal guardian" means a court-appointed legal guardian or court-appointed permanent custodian.
  - (d) "Relative" is a person who related to the pregnant or parenting minor as defined under RCW 74.15.020(4).
- (3) An unmarried pregnant or parenting minor is not eligible for TANF, SFA or GA-S unless the person:
  - (a) Has been emancipated by a court; or
  - (b) Lives in a home approved by the department and has a protective payee.
- (4) The home of a minor's parent, legal guardian, or adult relative may be approved unless:
  - (a) The minor has no living parent, legal guardian, or adult relative that can be located or those persons do not want the minor to live with them;

- (b) The minor or the minor's child is being or has been seriously harmed either physically, emotionally or sexually in the home of the parent, legal guardian, or adult relative;
  - (c) Substantial evidence exists of an act or failure to act by the parent, legal guardian, or adult relative that presents imminent or serious harm to the minor or the minor's child if they lived there; or
  - (d) The department determines that it is in the best interest of the minor or the minor's child to waive the requirement of living in the home of a parent, legal guardian, or adult relative.
- (5) If the home of a minor's parent, legal guardian, or adult relative is not available or suitable, one of the following alternatives may be approved:
- (a) A facility or home licensed under chapter 74.15 RCW that provides a supportive and supervised living arrangement requiring residents to learn parenting skills;
  - (b) A maternity home;
  - (c) Other adult-supervised living arrangement; or
  - (d) The minor's current or proposed living arrangement, if the department determines it is appropriate.
- (6) A home that includes the other natural parent of the minor's child or unborn child is never approved if:
- (a) The minor is under age sixteen; and
  - (b) The other parent is eighteen or older and meets the age criteria for rape of a child as set forth in RCW 9A.44.073, 9A.44.076, and 9A.44.079.
- (7) The income of a minor parent found ineligible under this section is treated according to WAC 388-450-0100 and 388-450-0115 when determining the eligibility and benefit level of the minor parent's child.

## CLARIFYING INFORMATION

2. If the Department determines that an unmarried minor parent is residing 's child, neither the minor parent nor the adult parent is eligible for TANF benefits. Only the minor parent's child is eligible in such cases (see **ASSISTANCE UNITS**).
3. The policies in this category apply to both male and female minor parents.

### WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. If the unmarried pregnant or parenting minor is residing with their parent, a teen living assessment is not required. For all other living arrangements, refer to Social Services for a teen living assessment before authorizing TANF or GA-S benefits for the minor.
2. Establish a protective payee for all eligible assistance units following local office procedures.
3. If the minor resides in an inappropriate living arrangement, deny cash assistance to the minor and the adult father of the minor's child if he resides in the home. Authorize TANF for the child or children living in the home if otherwise eligible.
4. See **INCOME** for allocation rules if a minor parent is denied or terminated under this policy.

#### **WAC 388-486-0010 Unmarried pregnant or parenting minors--Required school attendance.**

- (1) This rule affects only the minor's eligibility for cash assistance. It does not affect the eligibility of the minor parent's child for a cash grant.
- (2) To be eligible for TANF or SFA, an unmarried pregnant or parenting minor who has not completed high school or a general education development (GED) certificate program must participate in educational activities leading to the attainment of a high school diploma or GED.
- (3) The minor must meet the standard for satisfactory attendance set by the school or program in which the minor is enrolled.
- (4) An unmarried minor is exempt from this rule if the minor has:

- (a) Been emancipated by a court; or
  - (b) A child who is less than twelve weeks old.
- (5) The income of a minor parent found ineligible under this section is treated according to WAC 388-450-0100 and 388-450-0115 when determining the eligibility and benefit level of the minor parent's child.

### CLARIFYING INFORMATION

Educational activities include standard or alternative public school programs, state-accredited private schools, home schooling, GED programs, or any training program that contains an educational component that would lead to a high school diploma or GED. There is no requirement as to the number of hours a client must participate, but a minor must maintain satisfactory attendance as determined by the school or program in order to be considered “participating” for the purpose of this policy. **Note: This rule does not apply to GA-S recipients.**

### WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Verify high school completion or school attendance at application or eligibility review.
2. If it is unclear whether the client is participating in an acceptable education program, refer the client to Social Services.
3. Deny or terminate the TANF benefits for the minor only, if that individual is not participating. Do not deny or terminate the TANF benefits of the minor’s child.
4. See **INCOME** for allocation rules if a minor parent is denied or terminated under this policy.